Executive Summary

Housing & Homelessness in Olmsted County
“Heading Home” Annual Report

2012 Highlights

Operational Excellence
- 88% decrease in detox admissions for residents of Silver Creek Corner
- Coordinated and Participated in 1st Youth Community Connect
- Development and utilization plan for VASH vouchers
- Conducted WILDER study to gain information regarding homelessness in our community
- One of only eight Counties in MN to develop a plan-Anoka, Hennepin, Olmsted, Ramsey, Saint Louis, Scott, Carver, and Steele
- Utilizing HMIS for strategic planning and measurable outcomes

Strengths
- Exceptional Staff– true experts and advocates, committed to the delivery of quality care
- Strong partnership with ZVMHC, Center City Housing and Hearth Connections
- Close collaboration and partnership with housing agencies
- Strong relationships developed and maintained with providers
- Participation in Community Collaboratives– CoC, HCN

Mission Statement
We seek to prevent and end homelessness in Rochester and Olmsted County by developing local housing and supportive services that use evidence-based models and combine public and private resources.

Link to Heading Home Plan

On any given night approximately 650,000 people in the U.S. are homeless. This number increased 1.1% from January 2009 to January 2010. (2010 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress; updated September, 2012)

“So, we’re saying, if we can give developers and builders incentives to cut down on the regulatory barriers that are faced in this country, then we might be able to address the needs of affordable housing.”

Alphonso Jackson

Heading Home
Minnesota’s goal is to end homelessness in Minnesota by
- Education, Engagement, and Collaboration
- Increasing Access to Stable Housing
- Reaching out to People Who are Homeless and at Risk of Homelessness
- Improving Well-Being
- Transforming the Housing Crisis Response System

Community Services Mission Statement
“Building a safe, thriving and inclusive community”
Silver Creek Corner (SCC)

The doors of Silver Creek Corner opened in December of 2011. This home is a working partnership with Center City Housing, Olmsted County HRA, Zumbro Valley Mental Health Center and Olmsted County Community Services. The facility has the ability to house 40 individuals who are chronic inebriates who are long term homeless or at risk of homelessness in the SE Region. Initial statistics show that the use of the “Housing First” model has been successful. Over 50% of the residents have been stably housed for over one year and 75% of the residents have been stably housed for over 6 months. These statistics are impressive due to the long history of homelessness and unstable housing that this population has experienced.

Staff assist residents in establishing housing plans, budgets and reuniting with family; 89% of the residents now have a primary care provider to address medical needs rather than using the emergency room to meet their ongoing medical issues. Detox admission rates of the residents have been reduced by 88%, saving the County the cost of detox stays.

SCC has made significant positive changes in peoples’ lives in a short period of time, and the staff thank everyone for their support. Silver Creek Corner continues to strive towards supporting this population in improving the safety, health and well being of their residents.
Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)

The Shelter Plus Care program has been renamed as Permanent Supportive Housing. It remains a yearly renewable rental subsidy grant that serves homeless individuals and families with mental health and chemical dependency disabilities. Olmsted County has been receiving this grant annually for 19 years, as this grant can only be funded to a government entity or housing authority. Zumbro Valley Mental Health Center (ZVMHC) has been the support services provider assisting the individuals/families who receive the rental subsidies to maintain independent living. The goal of this program is permanent stable housing. There is no time limit on receiving a rental subsidy as long as the participant is compliant with the program requirements. This program, by working closely with landlords throughout Olmsted County, has been successful in housing 20 or more difficult to serve individuals and families annually, in scattered site apartment apartments.

PSH Program Detail—2012

Match Requirements:
There is a supportive service match requirement to this grant. Any service the participant is linked to can be used as a match. This includes case management, psychiatry, substance abuse treatment or medical care. The Shelter Plus Care participants’ normal service spending is sufficient to cover the required match, so there is no need to use levy dollars.

Administrative Costs:
Actual eligible administration costs, (up to 8% of the grant amount, related to administering the housing assistance) can be reimbursed.

Expense Breakout:
Rent: $111,497.21
Admin: $4,212.79
Inspection fees: $2100.00

The grant for April of 2012 to April of 2013 was $117,816.00 – we used $117,810.00. For 2013 – 2014 our grant amount increased to $138,524 due to an additional 7% increase in the amount of reimbursable administration fee.

Clients Served:
Shelter Plus Care served 34 adults and 8 children in scattered site housing.

Race:
57% White
29% Black/African American
10% Asian
4% Multiple Races

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The Southern Regional Project to End Long-Term Homelessness

Introduction

The Southern Regional Project to End Long-Term Homelessness is a collaboration to address long-term homelessness through permanent supportive housing. The Southern Regional Project is funded by the Long-Term Homeless Supportive Services Fund (LTHSSF) through the Department of Human Services (DHS). The project is comprised of 20 collaborating counties and maintains a contract with Hearth Connection to manage the project.

Project Goals

• Reduce the number of people experiencing long-term homelessness
• Improve participant housing stability, health and self-reliance
• Maximize participant choice and self-determination
• Reduce systemic barriers to housing and services
• Maximize, over time, funding available for supportive housing by demonstrating the individual, societal, and governmental benefits of ending long-term homelessness.

Target Population

The project is designed to serve people experiencing long-term homelessness (single adults, unaccompanied youth, or families who lack a place to live continuously for one year or more, or, at least four times in the last three years). Counties and service providers seek to serve people with the longest histories of homelessness and multiple barriers to health and housing stability, such as chronic health conditions, addiction, mental illness, and criminal histories. The project also targets those who have not been successful in other programs and need an ongoing intensive intervention in order to gain stability.

The average length of homelessness for participant heads of household in the Southern Regional project was 5.5 years, representing 22% of their adult lives, and averaged 6 episodes of homelessness, prior to involvement in the program. All program participants live under federal poverty guidelines.

Service Providers

Hearth Connection trains service provider staff on an approach to supportive housing that maximizes participant choice and delivers individual services. Services are delivered to participants through a scattered-site service delivery model in which participants live in private market housing, Board and Lodges, Group Residential Housing Sites, Adult Foster Care or other housing options and receive supportive services from mobile teams. In Olmsted County, The Homeless Services Team at Zumbro Valley Mental Health Center serves 56 participants.

Participant Outcomes

From the first month of enrollment to the most recent month of enrollment in 2012, the average income for all households increased 230%. 35% of all households were employed at some point while in the program.

Project Goal: Maximize Participant Choice and Self-Determination

Participants have the flexibility to move from their initial county of referral to another residence in the project or to another location within Hearth Connection’s other two regional projects (Northeast and Metro). The Southern project served 165 households with 242 adults, children and youth. Half of the people served were children or parents in families.

Success Story

Sue and her children (ages 9, 5, and 3) have been enrolled in the Southern Project for two years. Since age 18, she’d been homeless about six times and spent a total of two and a half years homeless. Sue couldn’t meet requirements with the county to maintain cash benefits or hold employment. Sue had several felonies on her record, was on probation, and had been working with child protection for about four years.

After joining the program, her life began to turn around. Sue found the strength and support to leave a physically abusive relationship that had lasted five years. She engaged in mental health therapy and connected her children to suitable resources. She got a job and has had the same employment for almost two years. Her child protection case was closed, and she is no longer on probation. She and her children have been in the same duplex for over a year.

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The Francis

The Olmsted County Housing and Redevelopment Authority (OCHRA) and Olmsted County Adult Services partner to provide supportive housing at The Francis, a 17-unit efficiency apartment building in downtown Rochester that serves adults diagnosed with a mental illness or substance use disorder who meet the definition of long-term homeless. Tenant rents are made affordable through a HUD shelter plus care grant, of $118,656 that runs September through August.

- 26 adults lived safely and securely at the Francis in 2012
- The 17 bed facility was refilled as 10 clients rotated out to greater independence or other destinations. Several of the residents needs were better met by Silver Creek Corner
- All residents experienced at least six months of permanent housing while in residence at the Francis
- The Francis population in 2012 was 20% female
- The youngest resident was 24 and the oldest 63
- Four of the residents were veterans

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 20 to 25% of the homeless population in the U.S suffers from a severe mental illness. Only 6% of the U.S. population is considered severely mentally ill.

Bridges

The Bridges Program is a subsidy administered by Olmsted County HRA that assists adults diagnosed with a serious mental illness by paying a portion of the rent to make housing affordable.

- Participants qualify when their gross income is at or below 50% of the area median income for household size
- Participants must be Section 8 eligible
- Participants live in apartments that they locate. The subsidy is paid directly to the participating landlord
- Seventeen total housing certificates are available to the program; seven of which specifically designated as long-term homeless and up to 10 vouchers for homeless, at risk, or rent burdened applicants

Housing Stability Through Heading Home Programs

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<td>2012</td>
<td>164</td>
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“Building a safe, thriving and inclusive community”
Programmatic Trends & Other Developments

- Center City Housing 2012 report “Families and Youth without Stable Housing in Rochester” supports need for supportive housing for youth and families with children
- Partnering with Center City Housing as the property manager of The Francis
- Discussion from the US Interagency Council on Homelessness around how to end youth homelessness
- Strategic planning is being developed around a coordinated housing assessment approach of how to align and utilize mainstream resources and the limited homeless resources to the greatest benefit
- Utilize the Affordable Care Act to improve access to health and behavioral care
- Utilization of GRH funding for scattered site housing
- Focus on Housing First model and building individualized supports around participants
- Increase in funding and attention to end homelessness for Veterans thru VA supportive housing vouchers

Next Steps

- Pilot centralized intake and coordinated assessment process for providers of homeless services
- Continue to work with Center City housing on development of services and permanent supportive housing surrounding youth and family homelessness
- Promote the development of subsidized housing

Conclusion

The Heading Home plan for Olmsted County has aligned it’s strategic planning with the Federal and State plans to end homeless by 2025. This roadmap is only the beginning of how we as a community need to continue to make changes that will have a positive impact on the lives of those who are living in poverty and are homeless. We appreciate the level of commitment by the Heading Home Olmsted Committee as they continue to confront the issue of homelessness. As we move ahead, we look forward to developing new partnerships that will have a positive impact on the residents of our community and thank the Board for their support.

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